

REGULAR MEETING-MANSFIELD TOWN COUNCIL
June 11, 2007

Mayor Elizabeth Paterson called the regular meeting of the Mansfield Town Council to order at 7:30 p.m. in the Council Chambers of the Audrey P. Beck Building.

I. ROLL CALL

Present: Blair, Clouette, Duffy, Haddad, Hawkins, Koehn, Paterson, Paulhus, and Schaefer

II. APPROVAL OF MINUTES

Mr. Hawkins moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to approve the minutes of the May 29, 2007 special meeting. Motion passed with Mr. Haddad abstaining. Mr. Hawkins moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to approve the minutes of the May 29, 2007 regular meeting. Motion passed with Mr. Haddad abstaining.

III. MOMENT OF SILENCE

Mayor Paterson requested a moment of silence in honor of and respect for our troops around the world. The Mayor also requested that the public remember Dorothy Goodwin who passed away recently. Ms. Goodwin represented Mansfield for many years and was a special person.

IV. OPPORTUNITY FOR PUBLIC TO ADDRESS THE COUNCIL

No comments

V. PUBLIC HEARING

1. Mansfield Charter Revision Commission Report

Mayor Paterson called the public hearing to order.

Tim Quinn, 101 Depot Road, commented that he was a member of the first Charter Commission and also served the Town in a variety of elected offices. He cautioned that it is very easy for the public to vote the bottom line without understanding the complexities of the budget. The Town has good professionals to make budget decisions. He supports the proposed plan.

Denise Keane, 96 Atwoodville Road, a member of the Charter Revision Commission, described the discussion that took place in the Committee regarding the role of Mayor. The Commission was split in their decision on whether to use the term "Mayor." Ms. Keane also commented that she would like to see the Town Meeting adjourn directly to a referendum. She stated that the proposed petition process does not address accessibility.

Lisa Eaton, 89 Lorraine Drive, read a letter from her husband, Charles Eaton, into the record (attached).

Quentin Kessel, 97 Codfish Falls Road, thanked the Council for all their work during the budget cycle and stated that the Town Council is elected every 2 year to make these decisions. He feels that unless citizens are present for a lot of the budget meetings they are not equipped to see the entire situation and it is easy to just vote no. He is content with the process as it stands.

Sheila Quinn Clark, 43 Mountain Road, also a member of the Charter Revision Commission pointed out that an election is different than a referendum. A referendum is a financial appropriation decision and this decision needs to be made on facts not rumors and misinformation. Ms. Clark stated that the Town Council can be changed every two years if the citizens are not happy and that in a referendum people tend base their voting decision on taxes not on the overall budget.

Jane Blanshard, 13D Sycamore Drive, is in support of the proposed referendum.

David Freudmann, 22 Eastwood Road, stated that the only difference between a Town Meeting and a referendum is the number of participants. He feels that if you are going to have voting the more inclusive the better.

Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, would like to keep the ability of non-resident taxpayers to vote at referenda and agreed that the budget is complicated. Ms. Wassmundt presented a newspaper article that compared turnout in a number of area towns (attached) and urged support for the going to referendum.

Richard Woodworth, 60 Woods Road, shared his observations of his first Annual Town Meeting.

Genevieve McGann, 87 Cedar Swamp Road, spoke in favor of the budget referendum expressing her concern for people who could not attend the Town Meeting.

Vera Stearns, 38 Old Wood Road, expressed her appreciation for the job the Town Council does on the budget. Ms. Stearns likes the Town Meeting and the discussion that takes place but would like the Council to consider adjourning to a referendum.

Howard Raphaelson, 119 Timber Drive, has asked people to attend the Town Meeting over the years but they seldom ever do because they are satisfied with the result. The Council, Board of Education and staff have earned a reputation for a carefully crafted balance between cost and services and citizens have not felt the need to object. Mr. Raphaelson did express concern that a small turnout at a Town Meeting could change the direction of the Town and therefore is in support of the proposed changes in which the petition option would serve as a safety valve.

Cindy Weiss, 58 MaxFelix Drive, a member of the Charter Revision Commission expressed concern over the Town Manager's suggestion to reduce the number of days to attain petition signatures from 21 to 14. Ms. Weiss suggested that the proposal is a carefully crafted compromise and that two weeks is not enough

time.

2. Proposed October 1, 2007 Refuse Fee Increase

Mayor Paterson called the public hearing to order.

Peter Rich, 42 Fern Drive, commented that the new fee for brush at the landfill is of concern to him. He also suggested that the Town consider not charging residents for trash pickup.

Betty Wassmundt, Old Turnpike Road, agreed with Mr. Rich concerning the fee for brush but over all is in favor of the increases. She would like to see a flier on the benefits of composting distributed to Town residents and would like the Council to investigate to see if more than #1 and #2 containers can be recycled.

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to move Item 6 Mansfield Charter Revision Commission Report as the next discussion subject.

Motion passed unanimously.
See below

VI. OLD BUSINESS

3. Proposed October 1, 2007 Refuse Fee Increases

Mr. Haddad moved and Ms Blair seconded to recess the meeting of the Town Council and convene as the Mansfield Resource Recovery Authority.
Motion passed with Mr. Clouette abstaining.

Director of Public Works, Lon Hultgren, discussed the current situation and options regarding the proposed charge for the disposal of brush. Council members expressed concern at the cost and the fear that an increase would cause more residents to burn their brush. Mr. Hultgren also promised to again investigate the possibility of recycling a larger variety of plastics.

Mr. Clouette moved and Mr. Hawkins seconded to adopt the amendments to the Refuse Fee Schedule as proposed by staff and endorsed by the Solid Waste Advisory Committee with the exception of the increase for brush, which will be \$10 per cubic yard, which amendments and revised fee schedule shall be effective October 1, 2007.

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Paulhus moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to adjourn as the Mansfield Resource Recovery Authority and reconvene as the Town Council.
Motion passed unanimously.

4. Community/Campus Relations

The Mayor reported on her attendance at a conference on Town/Gown relationships and stated that although Mansfield is far ahead of the game she was able to bring back some new ideas.

5. Community Water and Wastewater Issues

No Comments

6. Mansfield Charter Revision Commission Report

Attorney O'Brien outlined the process noting that the Council has 15 days to report back to the Charter Revisions Commission.

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Clouette seconded to schedule a Special Town Council Meeting at a date to be determined, for consideration of the Draft Report of the Mansfield Charter Revision Commission.

Motion passed with Mr. Schaefer abstaining.

7. Fiscal Year 2007/2008 Mill Rate

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Clouette seconded, to take from the table the resolution to set the Fiscal Year 2007/2008 Mill Rate.

Motion passed unanimously.

Mr. Haddad moved and Mr. Hawkins seconded the following resolution:

BE IT RESOLVED: That the Tax Rate for the Town of Mansfield for Fiscal Year 2007-2008 be set at 23.87 mills, and the Collector of Revenue be authorized and directed to prepare and mail to each taxpayer tax bills in accordance with the Connecticut General Statutes, as amended, and that such taxes shall be due and payable July 1, 2007 and January 1, 2008

Motion passed unanimously.

VII. NEW BUSINESS

8. Social Activities Group

Town Council members expressed support for the program

VIII. QUARTERLY REPORTS

IX. DEPARTMENTAL AND COMMITTEE REPORTS

X. REPORTS OF COUNCIL COMMITTEES

XI. REPORTS OF COUNCIL MEMBERS

- Mayor Paterson recalled some of the accomplishments of Dorothy Goodwin. She described her as a pioneer for women and visionary in her views of education.

XII. TOWN MANAGER'S REPORT

- XIII. FUTURE AGENDAS

- Ms. Koehn requested that the Council establish or review the policy regarding how to handle changes in revenue expectations, especially when the revenue is significantly larger than expected. Mr. Smith, Finance Director, stated that currently such funds are used for one-time expenses and to pay off future expenditures, but he will check to see if the policy explicitly states this.

Members requested that composting and the recycling of plastics be a future agenda item.

Jeff Smith also stated that Jamie Russell, Director of Information Technology will attend a future meeting to discuss among other things the blue sky initiative.

XIV. PETITIONS, REQUEST AND COMMUNICATIONS

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- 9. Chronicle, June 5, 2007, Mansfield PZC to Approve Downtown Plan"
 - 10. Fiscal Year 2005-2006 Annual Report
 - 11. June 18, 2007 Public Hearing on Proposed Driveway Work on 112 Dog Lane
 - 12. Press Release re: New Director of Information Technology

XV. EXECUTIVE SESSION

- XVI. ADJOURNMENT

Ms. Blair moved and Mr. Paulhus seconded to adjourn the meeting at 9:50 p.m.

Motion passed unanimously.

Elizabeth Paterson, Mayor

Mary Stanton, Town Clerk